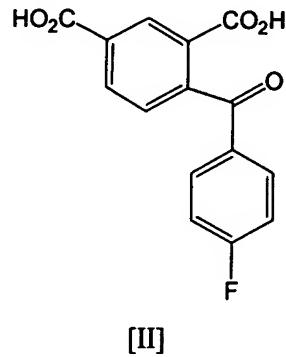


IN THE CLAIMS:

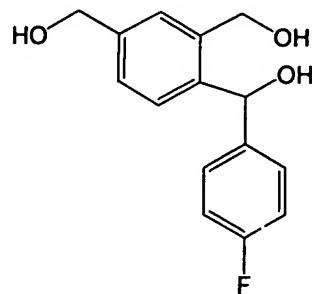
Please cancel claims 1-7.

Please add the following claims:

21. (New) A method for the preparation of citalopram, which method comprises the steps of (a) reducing the compound of formula [II]

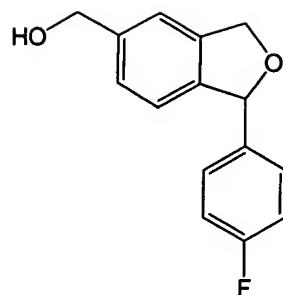


to form a compound of formula [VII]



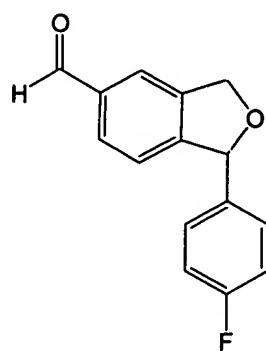
[VII],

- (b) cyclizing the compound of formula [VII] to form a compound of formula [III]



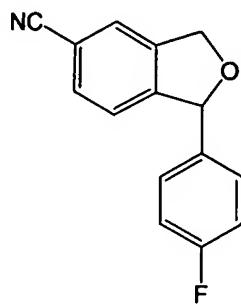
[III],

(c) oxidizing the compound of formula [III] to form an aldehyde compound of formula [V]



[V],

(d) converting the aldehyde compound of formula [V] to the corresponding 5-cyano compound of formula [VI]



[VI], and

(e) alkylating the 5-cyano compound of formula [VI] to form citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

22. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

23. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the compound of formula [III] is oxidized to form the aldehyde compound of formula [V] by reacting the compound of formula [III] with manganese dioxide to form the aldehyde compound of formula [V].

24. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

25. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the aldehyde compound of formula [V] is converted to the corresponding 5-cyano compound of formula [VI] by the steps of (d1) condensing the aldehyde compound of formula [V] with hydroxylamine or a mineral acid salt thereof to form an oxime intermediate, and (d2) dehydrating the oxime intermediate to form the 5-cyano compound of formula [VI].

26. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.

27. (New) The method of claim 21, wherein the aldehyde compound of formula [V] is converted to the corresponding 5-cyano compound of formula [VI] by the steps of (d1) condensing the aldehyde compound of formula [V] with hydroxylamine or a mineral acid salt thereof to form an oxime intermediate, and (d2) dehydrating the oxime intermediate to form the 5-cyano compound of formula [VI].

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28. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the method further comprises the step of (f) isolating the citalopram in the form of a base or an acid addition salt thereof.